

BRIAN PULIDO'S

Lady Death

THE WILD HUNT



CrossGen
#2 June
2004

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Jim Cheung
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Thus far In Lady Death



Lady Death



Tvarus



Char

Amidst a harrowing battle between warrior knights and the otherworldly Eldritch, a child is conceived. Blood of both clans, she belongs to neither. Years later, the child, Hope, is reborn as Lady Death.

A year has passed since the events of "A Medieval Tale," where Lady Death aimed a magical cannon at the border-bridge connecting the Eldritch and human lands at the height of the battle between them.

The Free Men (Lady Death, Char of the Greefsum, Archbishop Vittorio, Nivada, and Pelagrim the Eldritch) have evaded the Eldritch for over a year, but they suffer a terrible loss when their fellow rebel Cai is slain. In the Eldritch war room, The enigmatic Seer reveals that reality itself is unraveling and the border-bridge must be restored. Her plea goes unheard by her son, Tvarus, the leader of the Eldritch. He is distracted by his pleasure in the news that they have captured Margret and Isabelle, Lady Death's last remaining relatives...

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1226 A.D.

NOW.





KRAK

WHUMP

UGH

WELL?
ARE YOU
READY TO LIE
DOWN AND
DIE, HOPE?

FINISH
HER!

OR SHALL
WE CONTINUE THIS
CHARADE?
BETTER YET.
I'LL OFFER YOU
ONE FINAL CHANCE
TO JOIN ME.

FATHER,
YOU JUST DON'T
GET IT--



~NO
MEANS
NO!

ONE WEEK
AGO.

YOU
MUST BE
MAD!

TVARUS
HAS OFFERED
A PEACEABLE
TRUCE

THERE
CAN BE NO
PEACE WITH THE
ELDRITCH. HOPE
THEY MEAN TO
EXTERMINATE
US!

THEY ARE
A DUPLICIOUS LOT.
HE MAY OFFER PEACE
INTENDING ONLY TO
WAGE WAR--

WORD
HAS COME UP
FROM--

YES.
YES--

GLUNK
GLUNK

~THAT'S
WHY WE PLAN
FOR THAT

THEY WILL
ANTICIPATE OUR
ATTACK--

AND
WE PLAN FOR
THAT AS WELL,
VITTORIO.

STOP ARGUING!
LISTEN! WORD
HAS COME UP
FROM THE
REBELLION

THE ELDRITCH
WILL STORM
THE VATICAN
IN A FORT
NIGHT.

BUT THIS
COULD BE A
RUSE...

DO
WE LET
THIS DETER
US FROM
STOPPING
THEM?

ENOUGH
TALK!

I **WILL**
GO MEET WITH
MY FATHER!

HOPE!
CALM
YOURSELF!

HEY,
DEATH LADY
WHILE WE ALL
APPRECIATED YOUR
DRAMATIC DISPLAY
OF FEROCITY YOU'VE
JUST WASTED A
PERFECTLY GOOD
ROUND OF ALE
AND SPIRITS

A TRAGIC
CIRCUMSTANCE.

YES BUYIN'
THE NEXT ROUND

WHAT?!
YOU MUST BE
MAD!



NINE DAYS
AGO.

MAD?

PROTOMOSCUS
YOU MAY BE AN ELDER, BUT
YOU WOULD DO WELL TO MIND
YOUR TONGUE

BUT TVARUS
TO OFFER THEM A
TRUCE--

WE ARE NOT
HERE TO MAKE PEACE
WITH THE HUMAN VERMIN.

BESIDES
YOUR...DAUGHTER AND HER
FREE MEN WON'T HAVE IT!

YOU'RE
RIGHT

THAT'S
WHY WE PLAN
FOR THAT

THEY WILL
ANTICIPATE OUR
ATTACK

AND
WE PLAN
FOR THAT
AS WELL

LORD
WORD HAS
LEAKED TO THE
REBELLION

THEY KNOW
THE ELDRITCH
WILL STORM THE
VATICAN

AND HOW WAS
THIS INFORMATION
TRANSMITTED?

A TRAITOROUS
NOBLICT SLAVE GAVE
THEM WARNING

I TRUST
YOU'VE DEALT
WITH THIS
INDISCRETION?

WE
INCINERATED IT
AND ITS ENTIRE
FAMILY

WELL
DONE

NOW.

WHY DO
YOU DEFY
ME?

I HAVE
ONLY YOUR
BEST INTERESTS
AT HEART

YOU HAVE
A WARPED WAY
OF SHOWING IT,
FATHER.

ERGHHHH!

KEEP YOUR
DISTANCE.

CHING

I WON'T
HESITATE TO
KILL YOU...

...AND YOUR KIND
DOESN'T TAKE WELL
TO COLD IRON.

PROUD
BOASTS!

I SENSE
YOUR HEART
IS AFUTTER,
DEAR. YOU'RE
AFRAID.

YOU MAY
BE TRAINED IN
THE WARRIOR WAYS
OF MAN, BUT
SPELLS?

YOU'RE
LOST, UNGUIDED
UNDISCIPLINED.

I CAN'T
REMEMBER A
MORNING I HAVEN'T
WOKEN UP AND
WISHED YOU
DEAD.

WHEN
DOES IT END,
FATHER?

WHEN OO
YOU WAKE UP AND
REMEMBER THE MAN
YOU USED TO BE?

I AM
BLDRITCH, THE
CREATURE YOU KNEW,
HELD IN SWAY BY HIS PETTY
ROMANTIC NOTIONS
IS GONE!

THEN I
FEEL
GUILT FOR
WHAT I
MUST
DO.

RRRAA!



THIS MORNING.

AS I
SAID, THIS
TUNNEL
LEADS TO--

UGRK!

LOOK!
IT'S-- IT'S--
HORRENDOUS!

CHAR,
I'M SO SORRY
ABOUT YOUR
PEOPLE.

I SHOULD HAVE
BEEN HERE TO
PROTECT THEM.

HOPE,
THIS--I HESITATE
TO CALL IT A *PLAN*--
OF YOURS *ISN'T* A
GOOD IDEA.

CHAR,
I HAVE TO
GO.

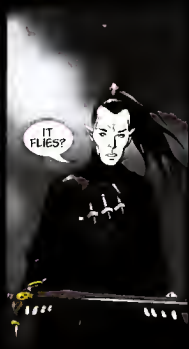
IF YOU
THINK TVARUS
HAS ANY HUMANITY
LEFT, YOU'RE
MISTAKEN.

IT'S NOT
THAT.

THEN
WHY GO?

JUST
STICK TO
YOUR PART
OF THE
BARGAIN.

NOW WE
BOTH HAVE
MUCH TO
AVENGE.



SO, DAUGHTER
YOU'RE WONDERING
WHY I SUMMONED
YOU HERE?

THE
THOUGHT HAS
CROSSED MY
MIND.

YOU
COULDN'T
RESIST COMING.
COULD YOU?

GET
ON WITH IT,
FATHER.

I'VE
GROWN TIRED
OF YOUR
GAMES.

I WANT YOU
TO JOIN US.
JOIN ME, BY
MY SIDE.

YOU ARE AN
UNPARALLELED
WARRIOR. YOU
EMBODY THE
BEST OF BOTH
WORLDS.

I CAN'T
BELIEVE
I'M
HEARING
THIS!

YOU'VE SPENT THE
BETTER PART OF A
YEAR HUNTING ME--
WHY THE SUDDEN
TURNABOUT?

I...
MISS
YOU.

YOU HAVE
THE STRENGTH AND SAVVY
OF A HUMAN AND THE SPEED
AND CUNNING OF AN ELDRITCH.

PLEASE!
YOU TRIED TO
KILL ME AT THE
BORDER
BRIDGE!

YOU
KILLED
WOLF!

IT GOT
WHAT ALL HUMANS
DESERVE

THEY
ARE NOT
LIKE US

THEY ARE
VERMIN

JOIN ME.
HOPE-TOGETHER
WE WILL MAKE THIS
WORLD A BETTER
PLACE.

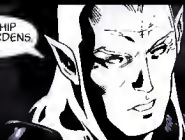
YOU
ARE INSANE,
AREN'T
YOU?

BEING
LOCKED IN THE
WOLF HOLE TWISTED
YOUR MIND. YOU ONCE
CARED ABOUT HUMANITY.
YOU **DESIRED** A
SOUL! YOU **LOVED** A
HUMAN BEING!

BUT NOW--
THAT MAN IS GONE.
ISN'T HE?



LEADERSHIP
HAS ITS BURDENS.
HOPE



YOU
CANNOT YET
APPRECIATE IT. BUT
I SPEAK THE
TRUTH



ENOUGH
PLEASANTRIES

WILL YOU
JOIN MY
CRUSADE?

YES
OR NO



NO.



VERY
WELL

BRING
THEM





PERHAPS
YOU RECOGNIZE
YOUR AUNT MARGRET
AND NIECE
ISABELLE?

AUNTIE HOPE!
AUNTIE HOPE! THERE'S
AN ICKY BUG IN

HOPE I'M
SORRY YOU
HAVE COME
HERE

THEY
MEAN US ALL
HARM! GO

SILENCE,
ANIMAL!

I BEG YOU
TO RECONSIDER MY
DAUGHTER

IF YOU
DON'T, THERE WILL BE
CONSEQUENCES



FREE THEM
FATHER

KEEP
THIS
BETWEEN
US.



BEFORE
YOU CONSIDER ANYTHING
RASH, PLEASE KNOW THAT YOUR
AUNT AND NIECE HARBOR VERY
NASTY CREATURES CALLED
SORMS IN THEIR EARS.

ANY MOVE TO
LIBERATE THEM WILL
RESULT IN THE SORMS
DIGGING INTO THEIR
BRAINS.

NOW,
WHAT SAY
YOU?



KREE-SCH

GET THE
GIRLS!

THEY ARE
THE ONES WHO
HAVE SORMS!

CONSIDER IT
DONE, CHAR! THOSE
COWARDS ALWAYS USE
SORMS. SO WE'VE
COME PREPARED
WITH EETLES!

IT'S A FEAST
FOR EETLES! SORMS
ARE A DELICACY TO
THEM! AS EVER, THERE IS
NO OUTTHINKING THE
CRAFTY GREELUM!

EERGH!

MY
EARS!

**GET
OUT!**

GOT IT!



LADIES--

DEAR LORD!

WHAT NOW?

A DRAGON?



--COME WITH ME.

NO PLEASE! HELP!

I'M SCARED, MOMMA!



DON'T BE FRIGHTENED-- I'M A FRIEND OF HOPE'S

I'M ON YOUR SI

ERGHI!

UHHH-- LADIES... HOLD ON...

TIGHT.

DRAGON?!
ARE YOU
CONSCIOUS?

DRAGON?
DRAGON?

DEAR
LORD!

ISABELLE
SWEETIE
CLOSE YOUR
EYES...

YOU!

YOU DID
THIS!

YOU
PLANNED
IT!

I AM
MY FATHER'S
DAUGHTER. I
KNEW YOU HAD
SOMETHING TO
LORD OVER
ME

SWORD
TO ME
NOW!

CHING

PERHAPS
THE ELDERS
WERE
RIGHT

YOU
NEED TO
DIE



HOPE!

DRAGON!
TURN AROUND!
CATCH HER!

I HAVE MY
ORDERS. I'M GETTING
YOU TO SAFETY

NO!



IF I
DIE YOU'LL
BE THERE BY
MY SIDE!



TASTE
IRON!



YOU
HAVE YOUR
MOTHER'S
FIRE HOPE I'LL
GRANT YOU
THAT~



BUT
YOU LACK
HER COMMON
SENSE.



COME ALONG,
COMRADES. MAKE
HASTE! SCURRY,
SCURRY!

CHAR?

YES?

LOOK--THAT
SARCOPHAGUS--



BY MASTER
GING'S BEARD!

IT IS THE
SEER!



SEER!

IT IS
YOU, NO?

INDEED.



COME!
LET US FREE
HER!

WHAT ABOUT
ESCAPING?

PRIORITIES,
NUMBSKULL! THE GREELUM
ARE MIGHTY AND MUST COME
TO THE RESCUE OF OUR
FELLOW REBELS!

...FOR THEY
HAVE FINE BAUBLES
WITH WHICH TO
REWARD US!



I BROUGHT
YOU HERE IN PART
TO ASSESS YOUR
COMMAND OF YOUR
MAGICAL ABILITIES
FIRSTHAND.

YOU HAVE
PROGRESSEO
AND WITH LITTLE OR
NO ACCESS TO OUR
ANCIENT TEXTS AND
SCROLLS.

YOU ARE
TRULY REMARKABLE
HOPE, BUT YOU
ARE INELEGANT. AN
UNTRAINED ANIMAL.
A FERAL PET...

...AND THE
TIME FOR PLAY
HAS ENDEO



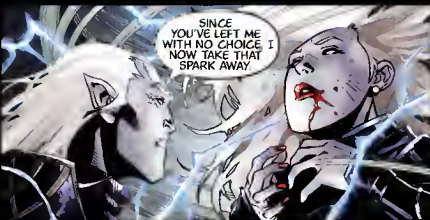
DO YOU
FEEL THE AIR
THINNING?

DO YOU
FEEL PRESSURE
AGAINST YOUR RIBS
YOUR LUNGS?

THAT IS
BECAUSE THE
ELEMENTS ARE
MINE TO
COMMAND.



BIO
FARWELL TO
YOUR TRUSTED SWORD
OR SHALL I SAY YOUR
SECURITY BLANKET





BRIAN PULIDO'S

Lady Death

#3

Next Issue:

UNBROKEN

THE WILD HUNT

CHUCK DIXON: WRITING 101

FROM PLUNOERING PIRATES TO HIGH-KICKING KUNG FU WARRIORS, WRITER CHUCK DIXON KNOWS HOW TO CREATE SIZZLING SCENES AND CAPTIVATING CHARACTERS. LEE ATCHISON OF SEQUENTIALTART.COM RECENTLY SAT DOWN WITH THE BUSY SCRIBE TO GET HIS INSIGHT INTO THE TRICKS OF THE TRADE. HOPEFUL WRITERS, TAKE NOTES!

One of the strengths of your writing is the appropriately quick pacing. Is that something that comes natural or a skill you've honed over the years?

I don't like to be bored writing and I figure if I move a story along briskly then the reader has to follow at my pace. I've learned what to leave out of a story to keep it moving. The audience is sophisticated enough to keep up at a blistering pace. They're hip to the language of storytelling.

Your dialogue is also a key strength. What do you think makes for good dialogue? Do you have any advice for budding writers looking to make their dialogue feel more natural?

Find a "voice" for your characters. You can base it on a character from a movie or TV show or, even better, someone you know. Each character should have his own voice. Their own phrasing and pattern and vocabulary. It's easier than it sounds. And you want to avoid giving your characters the same voice.

Also, avoid all current clichés. If you use phrases from a popular TV show to whatnot they'll read as so dated in a year or so. Also, most other writers are using them and you don't want to seem like one of the crowd.

Is there any part of writing that is more or less difficult for you? And what advice would you give to writers who are struggling with their craft?

Once I'm past the opening, I'm gold. The only challenge after that, for me, is scene segues. I know the scenes I want to write but I have to move between them in an entertaining manner and without losing

the reader.

My advice to fledgling writers? Relax! Don't sit in front of a blank monitor and pray for the muses to come. When it's not working you should go do anything else. Bike riding, walking, a nap. You can talk yourself into writer's block. I have to remind myself of this all the time.

Also, one bit of advice that I got from an interview with a screenwriter from the '40s: don't put down your last ideas of the day. It seems silly, but if you don't write that last page you have figured out or final panels then you'll already know where you're gonna start the next time you sit down to write. Sounds silly but it works!

You've written a lot of female characters and written them well: Oracle and Black Canary in *Birds of Prey*, the Silken Ghost in *WAY OF THE RAT*, Captain Sin in *EL CAZADOR* and a number of others in your CG books with larger casts. Is there any extra research you do to ensure you have the women 'right'?

Women are more interesting to write about because they're more complex than men. Guys do stuff 'cause "a man's gotta do what a man's gotta do." Even if that's watching Conan O'Brien while picking potato chip crumbs out of your bathrobe. But women are continually examining their personal relationships and striving for some kind of understanding.

Also, contrary to conventional chauvinist thought, women rarely get so emotional they can't function. A man cannot win an argument with an angry woman. She can be white hot angry and still make perfect sense. If a guy gets overwrought, he's

useless. Women can reach the heights of emotion and still use their intellect. Also, women and kids are always underdogs in a story and underdogs lend themselves to stories more than the archetype hero does.

At *CrossGen*, at least three of your titles are set in different historical time periods – how much research do you do for each title? How much research is necessary for artists who work on the books, in order to get details like ship's rigging and sails correct?

BRATH requires little new research as I have always been an avid reader of anything about the ancient Celts and Romans. And I've also collected reams of visual reference over the year. *WAY OF THE RAT* was mostly on (pencil)er Jeff Johnson's shoulders and he did all of the research into the martial arts and settings. He set the tone for the series. I still call him with questions even though he's moved on. *EL CAZADOR* is a challenge especially since nautical adventure fans are such sticklers for historical accuracy. So, the task has been daunting for (artist) Steve Epting. But he says he enjoys this, though I'm sure he curses my name by the light of the moon. For me, the language of *EL CAZADOR* is what poses the greatest challenge. I want it to sound right and avoid anachronisms, yet keep it vivid and engaging and understandable to modern audiences. And be creative with it. It's a tightrope walk each month.

It's widely known you'd love to write a western. What would you write if you had anything to choose from? And would *CrossGen* consider publishing it?

A western would be my first choice. While I thought the time was right for a pirate book, I don't have the same feeling for a western; not the kind I

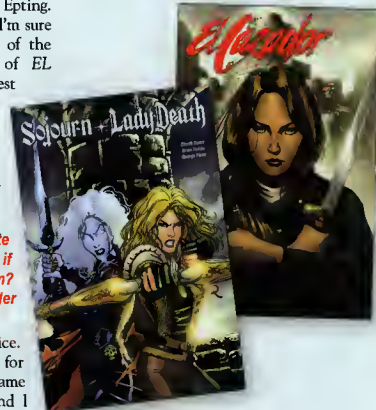
want to do anyway. I want to do a traditional western adventure. Anytime you veer from the formula it stops being a western. I want to embrace the conventions and play with them the way the Indiana Jones movies played with the cliffhanger formula.

Aside from westerns, what other wild or off-beat ideas do you have that you'd love to develop into a comic but haven't yet?

A gothic romance. And I would also love to do a detailed heist story showing a complex crime from beginning to end from the hood's point of view. An *Asphalt Jungle* kind of thing. And I have some insane ideas for how to update *The Jetsons*.

What comic are you most excited about working on right now?

It sounds corny, but all of them. I've always been lucky to have great assignments and work with the most engaging characters and the best creators. A little ray of sunshine, ain't it!



King Kirby

Part of the DCP family



DCP's 3000TH SCAN SINCE JANUARY 7TH, 2004